



NEWSLETTER MAY 2005

Introduction from the Chairperson

The MRTBQ has now been in operation almost three years and whilst it has had an operational policy on resumption of professional practice which was published in the May 2004 newsletter. The Recency of Practice discussion paper will initiate a process that will result in regulations within the Act to deal directly with the practical issues of continuity of practice and continuing professional development. The Board has received a considerable number of responses to its discussion paper and will now commence a period of review of these submissions before releasing a draft policy document for feedback.

Representatives of the Board will meet with industry liaison personnel in the June/July period and also with other radiation technologist registration board personnel in August to discuss issues of mutual interest.

Registration Renewal

Registration Renewal notices have recently been sent out and are payable to the Office prior to 30 June 2005. It is important to make this payment so that your registration does not expire on 1 July 2005. If your registration expires at this time and you continue to work you may be in breach of the legislative provisions of the Act pertaining to holding yourself out as a Radiographer, Medical Imaging Technologist, Radiation Therapist or Nuclear Medicine Technologist. **You should note that the MRTBQ in its 3 years of operation has not increased the registration fee by CPI increments as other Boards have, which it was entitled to do under the funding arrangements established with Government.**

Accreditation of Practices - SPP

In 2003 the Board adopted the accreditations which had been issued by the AIR and ANZSNM. The Board through the SPP Committee is now in

the middle of a 3 year process of reviewing all practices to assess suitability as a professional practice setting for SPP graduates. Under the legislation the practices must have adequate staffing ratios, equipment and procedures which enable the graduate to meet the competencies listed in the regulations. The progression of the graduate towards these competencies is reported to the Board on the graduate's progress and final reports. Practices need also to provide clinical case research opportunities.

Some of the practices seeking Board approval will be audited as part of the approval process. These audits are being conducted by members of the SPP Committee and involve a telephone and site visit. Practices which are found to be deficient in any areas will receive conditional accreditation for 2005 only and advised on what improvements they need to make to be fully compliant with the program. Some practices which do not meet the basic requirements of staffing ratio and exposure to equipment and procedures will not be accredited for the MRTBQ's Supervised Practice Programme.

The Board has recently met with the local representatives of the AIR and ANZSNM and corresponded with the National bodies of the AIR and ANZSNM regarding the duplication of the PDY and SPP processes in Queensland. The Board is awaiting a response from those bodies on this issue.

Recency of Practice

In line with the statutory obligation to protect the public by ensuring health care is delivered by registrants in a professional, safe and competent way, to uphold the standards of practice in the profession and to maintain public confidence in the profession, the Board has now begun the process of determining what recency of practice requirements should apply to the profession.

Consistent with its commitment to the open and accountable development of policy, the Board has determined that defining recency of practice will be based on a process of consultation with practitioners, health care consumers, professional organisations, employers and other interested parties. In this way, the development of the policy will reflect both the expectations of the community and the profession.

The Board has now released its 'Recency of Practice Discussion Paper', which marks the first stage in this consultation process. Recency of practice, when defined through this consultation process, will be directly linked to the annual renewal of registration. This is because the *Medical Radiation Technologists Act 2001* requires the Board, when deciding an application for renewal of registration, to have regard to the extent the applicant has satisfied "recency of practice requirements" that have been prescribed under a regulation.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE BOARD

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Awards Prizes and Grants

The Board has recently endorsed proposals and will be looking to implement them over the forthcoming year:

- The Board will sponsor a breakfast for graduates of QUT at which point they will be provided with documentation and advice on the Supervised Practice Program together with their responsibilities as Medical Imaging, Nuclear Medicine Technologists and Radiation Therapists.

- The Board has begun negotiations with QUT for the supply of prizes for their Medical Radiation Awards.
- The Board has commenced a dialogue with the national professional associations about implementing published scientific paper awards for peer reviewed articles, by Qld registrants, which appear in national and international journals.
- The Board will be awarding various prizes and research grants to Qld Medical Radiation Technologists. Details of these awards and grants and the processes involved will be detailed in letters to all registrants later in the year.

Complaints processes

It is important for registrants to be aware that the Board through the Office of Health Practitioner Registration Boards has a Professional Standards Unit responsible for the handling of complaints against registrants. These complaints can be by registrants against fellow registrants as well as by the general public against Medical Radiation Technologists. This is a key part of the profession being open and accountable in its practice. Complaints should be directed to:

**Complaints Assessment Coordinator
Office of Health Practitioner Registration
Boards
GPO BOX 2438
BRISBANE QLD 4001.
Telephone: 3234 0187**

Consistent with the advice provided to registrants and employers in 2002, 2003 and 2004, the Board is currently taking legal advice on the prosecution of employers and registrants who fail to register prior to commencing employment

Employers should note that prior to employees commencing work they need to have their registration status confirmed. They will either receive a letter / registration certificate or you can use the online registration check on the Boards website to confirm their registration status or contact the Board's Office.